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SUBJECT: USAU: AFRICOM COMMANDER GENERAL WARD MEETING WITH
AU PEACE & SECURITY COMMISSIONER DJINNIT

Classified By: Ambassador Cindy L. Courville, reason 1.4 (b, d)

¶1. This cable is from U.S. Mission to the African Union
(USAU) Ambassador Dr. Cindy L. Courville.

¶2. (C) SUMMARY: On November 7 AFRICOM Commander General Ward met Ambassador Said Djinnit, Commissioner of Peace and Security at the African Union to discuss AFRICOM. General Ward described AFRICOM as a &command under construction.8 Commissioner Djinnit welcomed the establishment of AFRICOM as an illustration of renewed US interest in Africa in general and the African Union in particular. The conversation touched on the location of AFRICOM headquarters, the security situation in Sudan and the transition of the AU,s peacekeeping mission (AMIS) to UNAMID, as well as the AU,s mission in Somalia (AMISOM). END SUMMARY

PARTICIPANTS:

¶3. (U) Peace and Security Commissioner Said Djinnit and two staff members; USAU Ambassador Cindy Courville, Commander of AFRICOM General William Ward, COL Dyfieri Harris, CDR Mark Swayne, CDR Michael Czarnik, USAU DCM Alfreda Meyers, Major Brittany Stewart, LTC Joseph Berry

BACKGROUND

¶4. (C) AFRICOM Commander, General Ward and USAU Ambassador Courville met with AU Commissioner Djinnit on November 7. The discussion focused on the establishment of African Command (AFRICOM) and related security issues in Africa. General Ward described AFRICOM as &a command under construction8 and emphasized it would be responsive to requests from African states. He characterized its intent as providing &focused advocacy8 and that AFRICOM provides a streamlined, single focused organization that will provide a more effective and efficient structure to continue US engagement in Africa and respond to articulated needs of African states for assistance in a range of activities to enhance peace and stability on the continent. The command, like its three predecessors, operates from the premise &to do no harm.8

¶5. (C) General Ward expressed the belief twenty years from now, the US and its African partners will look back and see the establishment of AFRICOM as a pivotal period in building stability and prosperity on the continent. General Ward emphasized US and African interests are interconnected, and US policy, expressed in the reorganization of US military command structures to create an African Command, reflects US intention to be a &force for good8 in Africa. He underscored the links that exist among governments, non-governmental organizations (NGO,s), private enterprise, and international partners for addressing African development

and security needs. He stressed AFRICOM is one partner among many and that AFRICOM will seek advice and counsel to be sure its undertakings compliment, support, and do not conflict with what other actors are doing throughout the continent.

¶16. (C) Commissioner Djinnit welcomed the establishment of AFRICOM as a demonstration of renewed interest in Africa generally and the African Union in particular. He recalled that the first letter of congratulations upon the establishment of the Africa Union had come from President Bush, and linked establishment of AFRICOM to a consistent development of US policy that recognizes Africa's importance in world politics. He welcomed the restructuring of US military commands as a rational vision of security globally,⁸ and he mentioned that he long held the need to have only one (U.S.) command to work with.⁸ Commenting on the skepticism that has greeted AFRICOM's creation, Djinnit noted the African Union was also greeted with considerable cynicism, which he characterized as part of life,⁸ although he noted African sensitivity to foreign involvement (in many arenas) remains an operative dynamic in African politics. Given the context of the post-9/11 world and Iraq, Djinnit felt that American engagement in Africa is positive, and he enjoyed AFRICOM's theme of adding value.⁸

¶17. (C) General Ward reemphasized the creation of AFRICOM in no way portends stationing of US troop in Africa. Nor will it result in establishment of US bases, although discussions about the relative merits of establishing certain parts of AFRICOM headquarters⁸ on the continent are ongoing. Djinnit welcomed the assurance no decisions have been made. He thanked General Ward for the details provided, but cautioned that often perceptions are more important than facts. Djinnit alluded that AU leaders may be soon advocate that no

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foreign troops will be welcome to be based in Africa.

¶18. (C) The discussion touched briefly on the difficulties surrounding the anticipated December 31 transition of the AMIS peacekeeping operations in Sudan to the UNAMID mission. Djinnit noted the Cease Fire Commission (CFC) is not functioning, and commented the AU is, in essence, paying approximately USD one million (\$1 million) a month in blackmail⁸ to approximately two hundred rebel group representatives. He also noted the threat to troops on the ground posed by the various factions. Turning to Somalia and the AMISOM mission, Djinnit noted US assistance and thanked the US for it.

WAY FORWARD

¶19. (C) Ambassador Djinnit outlined a way forward:

-- AFRICOM leadership and US policy makers take every opportunity to explain the reasoning leading to the decision to establish AFRICOM,

-- US take into account the strong suspicion of and resistance to foreign presence shared by many African states, often for disparate reasons.

YAMAMOTO